

Narangba Baptist Church

Constitution

ABN: 38987257842

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A Ministry of Queensland Baptists



Table Of Contents

1. Name	3
2. Doctrinal Statement and Ordinances	3
3. Purpose	4
4. Membership (Eligibility, Admission, Responsibility, Rolls, Removal, Transfer)	5
5. Meetings (Members, Extra-ordinary)	7
6. Church Officers (Pastoral Ministry, Church Secretary, Church Treasurer, Elders, Admin Team)	8
7. Funds and Assets (Received, Expenditure, Auditors, Application, Property, Trustees, Insurance)	13
8. Dispute Resolution	15
9. Sundry Matters (Annual Reviews, Safety)	15
10. Alterations to Constitution	16
11. Church Dissolution	16

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CHURCH CONSTITUTION:

1. Name

Narangba Baptist Church is a constituent member of The Baptist Union of Queensland (known as Queensland Baptists) and will be referred to as 'the Church' in this document.

2. Doctrinal Statement and Ordinances

At Narangba Baptist Church, **we believe;**

- a) There is one God, the Creator, eternally existing in three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 43:10-11, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Matthew 28:19, John 14:16-17)
- b) In the deity and humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He is both the Son of God and born of a virgin. (John 1:1-5, 3:16, Matthew 1:23)
- c) In the person and the work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of people, in their sanctification, His fruit and gifts abiding in the church, His leading and empowering of believers, and their preservation to the Heavenly Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:14, 1 Corinthians 1:7, Galatians 5:22)
- d) The Divine inspiration, supreme authority, and infallibility of the Word of God, in the original writings. (Matthew 24:35, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21, John 5:39)
- e) In the fallen sinful and spiritually lost condition of all people (Genesis 3, John 3:17-18,36)
- f) In the salvation of people from the penalty and power of sin, through the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, His atoning death on the cross, His resurrection from the dead, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His unchanging priesthood. (John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:8, Matthew 1:23, John 14:30, John 2:11, Isaiah 53:4-6, Matthew 28:6, Acts 1:9)
- g) In the essential need of a new birth through repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 2:3-16).
- h) That the Church, the body of Christ, is the community of people who confess faith in Jesus Christ. While universal, the Church is local in

expression and witness. It exists for worship, fellowship, evangelism, discipleship, and mission. Gifts of ministry are given by Christ to strengthen and mature the Church. (Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

- i) In the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is by immersion of believers upon the profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and is symbolic of their identification in His death, burial, and resurrection. The Lord's Supper is a memorial until He comes, of the sacrifice of the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19, Romans 6:1-10, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, Matthew 26:26-28)
- j) In the second coming of Christ, and that He will return personally and visibly to set up His Kingdom. (John 14:1-3, Acts 1:11, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)
- k) In the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment of all people by the Lord Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 9:27, John 3:36, John 5:28-29, 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, Revelation 20:11-15)

We practice:

a) Baptism (Water Baptism)

The Senior Pastor may baptise any believer upon application at his discretion, or alternatively a member of the Pastoral Team, Admin Team, Eldership, or Member of the Church may baptise any believer upon approval of the Pastoral Team.

b) The Lord's Supper (Communion)

The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly. All believers in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be invited to take part in the Supper. Church Members who continue to be absent from the Lord's Table will be spoken to by one of the Elders or Pastoral Team.

3. Purpose

The Church is called by God to enjoy, love, obey and serve Him. In doing so, we will advance the Christian Religion by pursuing the following charitable purposes.

- Provide opportunities for the congregation by regularly assembling for public worship, spiritual development, and the administration of the ordinances such as Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- The proclamation of the truths of the Bible so that people experience salvation, are taught how to become disciples of Jesus Christ, learn to live in love together, and grow to maturity in Christ under the guidance of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- The proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the community, nation and globally through evangelistic enterprise. To assist the poor and needy in practical ways, in the belief that social action and evangelism are mutually our response to the Gospel.
- To provide pastoral care to Members to nurture their spiritual development.
- All activities of the Church are done with the purpose of glorifying God.

The Church must operate consistently with legal requirements for registered charities, use its income and assets in relation to its purpose, and not distribute any income or assets, directly or indirectly, to its Members (refer also to 7D).

4. Membership

4A. Eligibility for Membership

Members must be at least 18 years old, have a sincere profession of faith, have been baptised (see section 2i), support the Purpose (see section 3) and Doctrinal Statement (see section 2) of the Church, and agree to be bound by this Constitution.

4B. Admission to Membership

Applicants for membership shall apply to the Pastor or Church Secretary. All applicants are expected to attend membership preparation where matters such as Constitution, Vision, Values and Ministries are addressed. Applicants will be interviewed to discuss their testimony and eligibility, with a recommendation being submitted to the Eldership for a decision. The Eldership will advise the

applicant of their decision and advise the Church Secretary to update the Members Roll, where appropriate. People will be Members from the time of their acceptance by Eldership and be welcomed at the next convenient Members meeting.

Where the applicant for membership has been a Member of another Baptist Church, letters of transfer and/or commendation shall be sought and shall be considered by the Eldership.

4C. Responsibility of Members

- (a) To always endeavour, by God's grace, to remain true to their commitment to Christ as expressed at their baptism.
- (b) To join regularly in the worship of the Church.
- (c) To lead a life worthy of Christ in love, humility, and peace, endeavouring to build each other up through encouragement, counsel, and comfort.
- (d) To study the Scriptures in private and in groups as the Lord gives opportunity.
- (e) To express their gratitude to God, and their responsibilities as His stewards by contributing regularly and generously to the financial support of the Church.
- (f) To seek opportunity to use their gifts in the ministry of the Church.
- (g) To pray regularly in private and where possible in fellowship for the people and ministry of the Church.

4D. Membership Roll

A Members Roll and an Inactive Members Roll shall be kept by the Church Secretary. This should include name, contact details (email), active dates, and inactive dates.

4E. Removal from Membership

The Eldership will prayerfully review the Members Roll at least every year. Where appropriate, efforts should be made to restore Members, the Eldership may decide to move Members names to the Inactive Members Roll where they are no longer attending the Church, are not considered to be adhering to the responsibilities of Members (see section 4C), or no longer meeting the eligibility requirements for Members (see section 4A). Members will be removed from the roll when they resign in writing, or if they die.

If the Eldership decides to restore an inactive Member to the Members Roll, they will become eligible to vote on Church business again from a month after that date.

4F. Transfer of Membership

Any Member in good standing may request that a letter of commendation be sent to another Baptist Church he or she wishes to join.

5. Meetings

5A. Members Meetings

Members meetings shall be held quarterly. One of these shall be the Annual meeting, to be held in July. An Elder, or their delegate, shall chair these meetings.

The Church Secretary will ensure that notice of all meetings is given on at least two Sundays prior to the meeting, and via all appropriate channels (email, online). Members meetings will usually be open to Church regulars to attend, but only active Members will be allowed to vote on Church business. All questions relating to agenda items should be forwarded to the Church Secretary in writing at least three days prior to the meeting.

Church Officers, who have been appointed after confirmation by Members, are delegated with authority to manage the day-to-day Church business and decision-making. Matters that must be brought to the Members for a ballot

include Pastoral appointments, Church Officer appointments, significant property transactions, setting the budget, and alterations to the Constitution.

A quorum for Members meetings shall be 25% of Members. Motions may be passed on the voices, by a show of hands, or by confidential voting at the discretion of the Eldership, by three-fourths majority. Where a quorum does not exist within 15 minutes of the meeting start time, the meeting may be adjourned to the following week, whereby the meeting will be considered competent to deal with adjourned matters whether a quorum exists or not.

Annual Meetings shall include the receiving of financial and other reports and voting for Church Officers as required.

Where it is not possible to have meetings in person due to emergency, disaster or similar impacts, Members Meetings may be conducted via online technology, provided it is accessible to Members, and they are able to contribute to discussions. Arrangements will need to be made for secure voting if that is also required.

5B. Extra-ordinary Meetings

An extra-ordinary meeting may be convened by the Senior Minister and/or Elders for a special purpose and only consider matters of which written notice has been given to the Church Secretary.

The notification and conduct of these meetings shall be in accordance with Members Meetings (see section 5A).

Some extra-ordinary meetings have different quorum and voting thresholds (see sections 6A, 6D, 6E, 10).

6. Church Officers

Pastors, Church Secretary, Church Treasurer, Admin Team, and Elders may be appointed as the officers of the Church who shall deal with the affairs of the Church. The Eldership is the primary level of authority in the Church with the other appointed officers reporting to it.

6A. Pastoral Ministry

The Senior Minister

The Senior Minister needs to be a person recognised denominationally through the registration process. The Senior Minister shall be a person who holds the doctrines set forth in this Constitution under the heading “Doctrinal Statement and Ordinances”. The Senior Minister will be appointed or removed upon a three-fourths majority vote of the Members present and voting at a meeting of which notice has been given on the two Sundays preceding such meeting, the purpose of such a meeting having been specified. The quorum on this occasion shall be three-fourths of the membership eligible to vote.

The Pastoral Ministry Team

Associate Pastors shall be persons who hold the doctrines set forth in this Constitution under the heading: “Doctrinal Statement and Ordinances” and are recognised within the Narangba Baptist Church.

Where more than one Pastor is appointed, the Pastors shall comprise the Pastoral Ministry Team in which one shall be the Pastoral Team Leader. The Senior Minister shall normally be ex-officio presiding officer of all organisations, although this responsibility may be delegated to another member of the ministry team.

When calling a Minister

A Pastorate Committee appointed by the Eldership shall call for nominations, which shall be in writing and state the reasons for supporting the nomination. Should more than one name come before the Committee, discussion will continue until agreement is reached regarding the approach to one person.

The Committee shall communicate privately with this nominee to ascertain their willingness to allow their name to be placed before the Church. Should this nominee be willing, the name shall be submitted to the Church. Only one name shall be before the Church at any one time. In the event of an adverse

vote, or a call or approach not being accepted, the above procedure shall be repeated until successful.

All terms and conditions of a call shall be conveyed to the Minister in writing, having previously been clarified between both parties, together with full particulars of the Church and its development. For further clarification on the calling of a Minister, refer to Queensland Baptists website for their current calling procedures.

Acceptance shall be made in writing to the Church indicating acceptance of terms of call. The tenure of office of a Minister may be terminated by two months' notice in writing by either the Minister or the Eldership subject to the conditions above.

6B. Church Secretary

A Church Secretary should be appointed by the Eldership and confirmed by ballot at the Annual Meeting. A three-fourths majority vote is required. This role is not to be combined with that of Elder or Admin Team.

The Church Secretary shall ensure that adequate records are kept of all meetings of Church Officers and receive and conduct correspondence and notifications for the Church.

By means of an annual report and otherwise, the Secretary will ensure an adequate flow of information from the various Committees to the Church Members.

The Church Secretary shall keep an up-to-date Members Roll and Inactive Members Roll which shall be available for Members to scrutinise (being names only, and no other personal details).

Length of tenure will be at the discretion of the Eldership.

6C. Church Treasurer

A Church Treasurer should be appointed by the Eldership and confirmed by ballot at the Annual Meeting. A three-fourths majority vote is required. This role is not to be combined with that of Elder or Admin Team.

The Church Treasurer is responsible for all monies received by the Church, and for all expenses incurred by the Church. A record of all financial transactions must be maintained and reported to the Church and its Office bearers as requested.

An audited Treasurer's Financial Statement covering the income and expenditure for the past year, shall be presented at the first available Members meeting after auditing is completed.

Length of tenure will be at the discretion of the Eldership.

6D. Elders

The Biblical material, especially 1 Timothy 3:2-7, Titus 1:7-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, shall assist the Senior Minister in selecting potential candidates for Eldership. Only persons of known maturity, spirituality, and gifts appropriate to the office shall be appointed upon confirmation by ballot at a Members or Extra-ordinary meeting.

Elders will be appointed or removed upon a three-fourths majority vote of the Members present and voting at a meeting of which notice has been given on the two Sundays preceding such meeting, the purpose of such meeting having been specified. The quorum on this occasion shall be three-fourths of the membership eligible to vote. Elders shall be confirmed every three years. There shall be a minimum of 2 Elders, not counting the Senior Minister.

Potential Elders shall be identified by the Eldership in consultation with the Senior Minister and Associate Minister/s. Elders appointed from the membership of the Church, shall share with the Pastor(s) in the pastoral ministry of the Church.

Elders shall be responsible to the Church in cooperation with the Senior Minister/Pastor(s) and shall:

- (a) Share in the pastoral ministry and shepherding within the Church.
- (b) Discern spiritual direction and priorities for the Church.
- (c) Pray for and protect the congregation, including against false teaching, and anything that seeks to divide or harm the people.
- (d) Provide wise and scriptural counsel and correction to those requiring it.
- (e) Participate in the preaching and teaching ministry of the Church when they are recognised as having these gifts and are invited to do so by the Senior Minister.
- (f) Ratify the vision, the policies, and procedures of the Church.

Termination: An Elder shall have their period of service terminated by any of the three methods set out below:

- By voluntary resignation
- By direction of the Eldership
- By an extra-ordinary church meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution for the termination of the minister.

Elders, while meeting separately, may from time to time meet with the Admin Team for mutual benefit.

6E. Admin Team

People who have been active Members of the Church for at least six months may be appointed to the Admin Team by the church at the Annual Meeting. There shall be a minimum of 2 Admin Team members, not counting the Senior Minister.

The number of Admin Team members to be appointed shall be determined by the Eldership prior to the Annual Meeting. Nominees shall give evidence of spiritual maturity and fulfil the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13. An Admin Team member may be appointed by the Eldership, to assume the role of Head Administrator and chair their meetings.

The Admin Team shall attend meetings connected with the responsibilities which relate to the maintenance and development of the practical business of the Church. This may include tasks that support the Eldership in their responsibilities.

Nominations for the office of Admin Team member shall be invited from the membership. Such nominations should be in writing, signed by the nominator and the nominee and in the hands of the Church Secretary not later than four weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. The Eldership shall confirm the suitability of nominees for this role or suggest other suitable candidates where appropriate.

Admin Team members shall be appointed upon a three-fourths majority vote of the Members present. The quorum on this occasion shall be three-fourths of the membership eligible to vote.

Vacancies during the year shall be filled in the same manner. Each year, half the number of Admin Team members decided upon by the Church shall be elected for a term of two years. Those retiring from office after two years shall be eligible for re-election.

Termination: An Admin Team member shall have their period of service terminated by any of the three methods set out below:

- By voluntary resignation
- By direction of the Eldership
- By an extra-ordinary church meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution for the termination of the minister.

7. Funds and Assets

7A. Funds Received

The Church may receive funding from donations, grants, fundraising, rent, interest, and any other lawful sources approved by the Eldership that are consistent with furthering the Church's purposes.

Any gift given to the church for a particular purpose will be treated as free of any obligation to use it for that purpose (to avoid potential tax issues, as a tax-exempt entity). This does not apply to offerings directed towards missions, for example, as no tax issue is involved.

The Church may develop a financial procedures manual to manage the day-to-day financial processes. This should be approved by the Eldership and managed by the Church Treasurer.

7B. Expenditure Transactions

All expenditure, whether via cheque or online transactions, shall be co-signed/co-approved to ensure accountability and transparency of those transactions.

7C. Auditors

The Admin Team shall appoint auditors in consultation with the Church Treasurer to audit the financial records of the Church for presentation at the Annual Meeting.

7D. Application of Church Assets and Income

The assets and income of the church shall be applied solely in the furtherance of its charitable purpose and the advancement of religion, and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the Members except as bona fide remuneration where a member is an employee of the church, fee for services where a member is a contractor to the church and reimbursement of expenses incurred by a member on behalf of the church.

7E. Property

Church buildings and properties shall not be used or occupied by people or organisations for any purpose except where previous consent has been obtained from the Church Secretary, who with the Eldership, may give such consent in accordance with the decisions and guidelines laid down by the Church.

7F. The Trustees

The Trustees of all Church properties shall be The Baptist Union of Queensland.

7G. Insurance

Insurance shall be affected on all Church buildings and property in accordance with the requirements of The Baptist Union of Queensland.

8. Dispute Resolution

Where there is a dispute between Members, or a Member and an Office Holder, the parties should attempt to resolve the issue in accordance with the process outlined in Matthew 18:15-17. If this has been done, but without resolution, only then may it be brought before the Eldership.

Where a member becomes an offence to the Church by reasons of immoral or un-Christian conduct, the Church will make every effort, in the spirit of love and meekness, to restore such a member to fellowship. Where such efforts fail, the Eldership may terminate or inactivate for a specified time, his or her membership.

Where a dispute is unable to be resolved within the Church, Eldership may refer the matter to The Baptist Union of Queensland or some other competent arbitrator, if agreed to by all parties of the dispute.

9. Sundry Matters

9A. Annual Reviews

The Senior Pastor and Eldership (where appropriate) shall conduct annual reviews of all Church Officers, including acknowledgement of positive aspects of their performance and identifying aspects that would benefit from future development. Input may also be sought from selected Members.

9B. Safety

The Eldership shall nominate a person to put measures in place and conduct training of leaders and volunteers to minimise the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults. They will review this annually and update where necessary. This person will also be trained and designated as a contact and support person for anyone reporting an incident or seeking assistance with the process. The Church will also subscribe to any suitable compensation scheme that covers victims of abuse within the Church.

The Church will also put measures in place to ensure the general safety and wellbeing of all attendees at Church events and review these arrangements from time to time as appropriate.

10. Alterations to Constitution

No alteration shall be made to the Constitution except by a three-fourths majority of Members present and eligible to vote at a meeting convened for the purpose. The quorum on this occasion shall be three-fourths of the membership eligible to vote.

Any proposed change to the Constitution shall be given in writing as a Notice of Motion to the Eldership and shall be distributed by the Church Secretary to all Members not less than one month before the date of such a meeting.

The Secretary for Queensland Baptists shall be notified of any changes to this Constitution by the Church Secretary within 14 days of any decision being made by the Church.

11. Church Dissolution

The Church can be wound up by Members passing a special resolution at an extra-ordinary meeting. After it has paid all debts and liabilities, including the costs of winding up, any remaining assets must not be distributed to Members or former Members, but must be distributed to The Baptist Union of Queensland.

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